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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 07 ROME 000776

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SUBJECT: TRIESTE G8 FOREIGN MINISTERIAL: FOCUS ON IRAN,
MEPP, FOOD SECURITY

ROME 00000776 001.4 OF 007

Classified By: CDA Elizabeth Dibble for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

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¶1. (C) Under Secretary Burns headed the U.S. delegation to the G8 Foreign Ministers meeting in Trieste June 25-27. The G8-only portion of the meetings focused on global and regional challenges but the forum grew on June 26th to include meetings between the G8 and Afghan and Pakistani foreign ministers and then a larger G8 Outreach session that included Afghanistan and Pakistan's regional neighbors, UNAMA, NATO and other multilateral organizations, international financial institutions, and major stakeholder countries in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In the G8-only session, ministers presented a united front condemning the violence in Iran but were divided on imposing more stringent sanctions. On the Middle East, all endorsed the renewed U.S. effort spearheaded by Senator Mitchell. Most believed Israel was moving in the right direction, but needed to do more. On Africa, ministers expressed concern about Somalia as a long-term source of instability and agreed on the need for G8 cooperation to boost the role of the African Union and enhance its capabilities to deal with crises on the continent. Ministers condemned recent provocations by North Korea and called for full implementation of UNSCR 1874. Readouts of the G8 Outreach session with Afghanistan, Pakistan, the countries of the region, and international and multilateral stakeholders will be reported septel. End Summary

Global Issues: Non-traditional Threats, Piracy and Non Pro

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¶2. (U) FM Frattini kicked off the frank and relatively unscripted working dinner with an overview of challenges facing the international community. Highlighting emerging, non-traditional threats like the global financial crisis, food security, mass migration, the environment, and more traditional threats like institutional instability, he detailed his vision for an early warning system for destabilizing factors and the importance of the G8 promoting greater coordination. Emphasizing that the G8 cannot dictate rules to countries in Africa and elsewhere, he called for the G8 to leverage soft and smart power to tackle these challenges. EU Commissioner for External Relations Ferrero-Walder emphasized the importance of looking at the links between security and development and endorsed Frattini's call for a holistic approach. She proposed a concept of "human security" that leveraged hard, soft and smart power to ensure freedom from fear and want.

¶3. (U) Building on these comments, Under Secretary Burns emphasized the U.S commitment to fighting hunger and working toward a new global approach to food security. Referencing last year's commitment to establish a Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security, he commented on the challenge in translating that commitment into practical steps. He noted the U.S. intent to double its commitment to agricultural investment for food security and highlighted President Obama's request for more than one billion dollars in assistance. In response, FM Frattini noted his intent for the Chairman's statement to contain a strong message on food security.

ROME 00000776 002.4 OF 007

¶4. (U) Japanese FM Nakasone underscored that transnational threats like organized crime and piracy transcend borders thereby becoming shared problems. In these cases, one must address root causes and implement development programs that address poverty, education and good governance. He noted that, despite the recession, Japan has pledged over \$20B in overseas development assistance (ODA). German FM Frank-Walter Steinmeier noted the rise in kidnappings and concerns about the situation in Yemen and Somalia. EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana noted that Ministers have raised many of these issues repeatedly in various meetings. The challenge is that while there may be global problems and global solutions, we are limited by national resources and national legitimacy.

¶5. (C) Russian FM Sergei Lavrov declared his belief it was important to discuss how to approach collective decision making and international security in the post-Soviet era. Thanking Frattini for urging the group to consider problems other than "hard security," UK FM David Miliband asked the group whether it is possible for collective security to have a political form in a world without a hegemon, and suggested it could be valuable to examine some hard cases as case studies. French FM Kouchner commented that this kind of frank and open discussion made him feel as if he were not at a Foreign Ministerial, and made everyone seem a bit more humane. Lavrov, seizing on Miliband's suggestion of examining case studies launched into a long tirade on Georgia, which ended when FM Frattini suggested Ministers "not go down this road," and move on to the next agenda item.

¶6. (C) Discussions turned to piracy, and Ministers discussed the difficulties posed by the lack of a system for prosecuting pirates and the importance of targeting its root causes. Frattini noted the problem would be impossible to resolve at sea if it were not also coordinated on land, and suggested that the \$90M Euros paid in ransoms and bounties would have been better spent on programs to bolster security and stability in Somalia. Miliband suggested that more could be done to track the flows of money, and Frattini agreed to strengthen the Chairman's statement to reflect that point.

¶7. (U) The working dinner closed with a brief discussion of nonproliferation, with many noting the dynamic impact of President Obama's remarks in Prague. Leading the discussion, Steinmeier called for the G8 to demonstrate its resolve by committing to a "world free of nuclear weapons," noting that this world would not be created overnight. The remainder of the discussion focused on achieving consensus on how to address this point in the Chairman's statement.

Iran: Condemning Violence, Split on Tougher Sanctions
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¶8. (C) The following morning, discussions shifted from global to regional issues. Lavrov led the discussions on Iran, providing a brief overview of the current situation. He acknowledged the position of the U.S. created a more constructive atmosphere but cautioned that increasing pressure on Iran or "introducing instability" could be counter-productive. French FM Kouchner noted that Iranian FM Mottaki's meeting with President Sarkozy had gone poorly and that moments before the meeting, Ahmadinejad had issued yet another provocative denial of the Holocaust. He noted that we owed it to those demonstrating to "speak their fight" and

ROME 00000776 003.4 OF 007

provide moral support for those expressing freedom. Solana stressed that the outcome in Tehran was far from clear and that the most important thing was to maintain unity among the international community. He added that, whatever the outcome, it was unlikely that the Iranian government would return to the negotiating table any time soon. He also warned that Iran may try to "export its problems" and sow instability in Lebanon and Syria.

¶9. (C) Japanese FM Nakasone noted that the expulsion of a British diplomat was worrying and that Iran must fully comply with the UNSC resolutions but counseled that we not overreact. He added that Iranian society was not monolithic and that internal schisms were the backdrop for the current unrest. U/S Burns noted that the events underway in Tehran will have lasting significance and he shared the sense of concern and urgency of many ministers. He maintained U.S. commitment to the 3 3 process but cautioned that engagement was not an end in and of itself.

¶10. (C) Noting the G8 were "in a race against time," UK FM David Miliband noted that the next six months were critical. He stressed that a unified position on Iran among the G8 nations prior to the UN General Assembly was important. He observed that the events of the last two weeks had demonstrated that the Iranian population is increasingly sophisticated, connected, and discontented, saying that "several bricks have been removed from the wall." Noting that the protests have crossed social, economic and religious lines, he said the international community will have to think carefully about how it applies pressure, and that it will need to employ a wide-ranging definition of pressure. He also noted a need to make Arab nations a part of the debate to emphasize the threat they feel from Iranian proliferation activity. Italian FM Franco Frattini noted the silence of the Arab League to date on the Iranian issue and hoped that interactions between G8 nations and the Arab League would encourage the Arab League to speak out on the Iranian proliferation threat.

¶11. (C) Russian FM Sergei Lavrov was critical of unilateral sanctions above and beyond agreed multilateral actions. He said such actions undermine the united message. Further, he noted that Iran cites unilateral sanctions outside the UNSC framework as evidence of a lack of will to negotiate in good faith on the part of certain countries. Still, Lavrov said he does not see any evidence that Iran has taken the political decision to pursue weaponizing uranium. He also called for the G8 to support efforts to negotiate a Nuclear-free Middle East.

Middle East Peace Process: Support for U.S. Approach

¶12. (C) All delegations were positive on the USG's and Senator Mitchell's personal efforts. The consensus was that Israel was moving in the right direction with its recognition of a future two state solution, but that Israel needed to go further, especially on settlements. The EU was particularly concerned about limitation on Palestinian movement and a lack of access to basic goods and foreign aid in Gaza. All noted the need for movement on broader Middle East peace, not just the Israeli-Palestinian track.

¶13. (C) US Burns said the President made the Middle East

ROME 00000776 004.4 OF 007

peace process a clear priority, both in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian track and other tracks such as the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. He noted the USG intention to send an ambassador to Damascus as an example of the seriousness of our efforts. On Iraq, Burns cited progress but noted that the situation is still fragile. He emphasized that the USG is seriously committed to meet its obligations under its bilateral accord with Iraq. He assured all the U.S. would indeed go ahead with the withdrawal of troops from combat areas by the end of June as scheduled. He noted that Iraq is re-integrating into the Arab world and that relations with Turkey were improving.

¶14. (C) Special Envoy for Middle East Peace Mitchell provided an update on U.S. efforts towards Middle East peace noting that the USG goal was early results rather than merely a resumption of talks. He said full compliance with roadmap obligations was essential. He noted that he would see Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak next week and that he expected serious negotiations on the Israeli-Palestinian track to begin in the coming weeks. He said it would be crucial to the success of negotiations to create an impression among the Israeli and Palestinian people that peace is possible. A concerted message of optimism from the G8 would help send that signal. He said the way forward from the USG perspective would be serious movement on the Arab Peace Initiative. He stated progress on the Israeli/Palestinian track would come when both sides live up to their roadmap obligations. He said that Israel and Syria both seem willing to negotiate but have different preferred methods with Syria pushing to finish the Turkish-led indirect talks followed by direct talks with the U.S. present while Israel prefers direct talks with no preconditions.

¶15. (C) Lavrov said the Israeli position was gradually moving in the right direction, but opined that Israel's formulation of the two state solution still needs to be stronger. He praised IsraQFM Lieberman's recent positive comments on the Arab Peace Initiative, even if they were qualified. He also highlighted a lack of Israeli criticism of the May 11th UNSC statement as a positive signal. He stressed the importance of the U.S. inclusion of the Arab Peace Initiative as part of its Middle East Peace strategy and the need for "active" unity of the Quartet. He expressed strong support for Egyptian efforts to construct a Palestinian unity government and called for the G8 countries to work to create an environment where candidates for the upcoming Palestinian elections run based on the PLO platform and Arab Peace Initiative as the way forward for peace. Japanese FM Nakasone stressed the need for G8 cohesion on the two state position and support for the Arab Peace Initiative.

¶16. (U) EU Commissioner for External Relations Ferrero-Walder said that a cessation of settlement activity and reduced restrictions on Palestinian movement are imperative. She said the EU is very concerned over the situation in Gaza where the flow of aid and basic foodstuffs is badly impaired. While Israel is allowing a broad range of goods, she maintained the overall volume is still low and insufficient. She stressed that the Palestinian Authority is in a huge

financial crisis. She said that promised international aid is not arriving and particularly singled out Arab countries for not living up to their promised commitments. She asserted that G8 countries ought to set the example by fulfilling their pledges as soon as possible.

ROME 00000776 005.4 OF 007

¶17. (C) EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana noted that the most significant new factor in the current round of Middle East peace diplomacy is the more active engagement of the Arab countries. He warned that some sort of agreement on settlements would be the trigger for serious Arab nation engagement. He also noted that dialog with Arab state should include discussions on Iran and other issues. French FM Bernard Kouchner said that Israeli proposals to remove "outposts" were insignificant because these settlements were already illegal according to Israeli law. He lamented that Israel did not seem to recognize the importance of movement on the settlement issue. He did note some progress in separating Syria from Iran.

¶18. (C) Miliband complimented recent U.S. efforts but noted the need to have a "bottom up" approach to address concerns such as those cited by Ferrero-Walder. He said the 2008 negotiations focused on broader issues while neglecting lower level concerns (such as availability of goods in GaQ but Gaza violence eventually took center stage and killed momentum on the Annapolis process. He also stressed the need to fully implement UNSCR 1860 on smuggling in the Palestinian territories. He called Lebanon a bellwether (usually for negative trends in the Middle East) and hoped that the positive election results would foreshadow other positive political developments in the region. He also noted the emergence of Najaf as a Shiite religious center as an important regional development.

Africa: African Union, Somalia, Shrinking Assistance

¶19. (C) G8 Foreign Ministers briefly mentioned the latest developments in African hotspots. Most highlighted the need to coordinate G8 responses and strength the African Union as an institution. France and the UK strongly disagreed about the potential utility of Ethiopian military engagement in Somalia. The UK asserted that any Ethiopian involvement would galvanize rebel recruiting and possibly result in a proxy war with Eritrea. The French countered that the Ethiopians were the only ones positioned to intervene quickly in Somalia and that excluding the Ethiopians in a moment of crisis would be akin to condemning the transitional government to utter defeat.

¶20. (C) Canadian FM Lawrence Cannon said the G8 members should approach the Sudanese situation with the knowledge that the North/South peace agreement could fail and that G8 countries should work to push the Sudanese government to support UNAMID. He called for action to deal with the drug trafficking problem in Guinea Bissau and to stop sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He urged support for human rights and reformers in Zimbabwe. He urged delegations to find a way to stay engaged in Africa despite the economic crisis. He lamented that the economic crisis would be particularly felt in already poverty stricken populations.

¶21. (C) French FM Kouchner called the return of coup d'etats deeply troubling. He said the African Union is struggling to respond appropriately. He urged a common G8 position on coups. Ferrero-Walder noted the EU-Africa Partnership is making progress. She said the initiative is moving beyond

ROME 00000776 006.4 OF 007

development to address energy issues, joint approaches to world problems and starting to involve civil society in its activities. She urged financial and training support for the African Union.

¶22. (C) Miliband stressed that the global financial crisis will have foreign policy impacts, particularly in Africa. He called for delegations to resist pressure on their development budgets. He noted the role of the African Union will be crucial over the next five years and encourage support to build the AU as an institution. He also said that China is playing a much bigger role in Africa and that delegations should see this as an opportunity.

¶23. (C) German FM Frank-Walter Steinmeier called Somalia remote from any form of stability. He posited that the transitional government may have a small opening to create stability now. He suggested three ways to support the transitional government: giving the government money to pay for security forces, possibly training for Somali forces in Ethiopia, and working to more effectively deliver aid to Somalia. Kouchner agreed with the German proposal on all three points. He noted that France was training Somali troops already in Djibouti and suggested the U.S. might be able to as well. He emphasized that, at the present time, Ethiopian forces were the only ones who could intervene quickly.

¶24. (C) Miliband responded that having Ethiopia involved in Somalia was like "waving a red flag in front of a bull." He said it only increased recruiting for the rebel "Shabab" and risked starting a proxy war between Eritrea and Ethiopia in Somalia. Kouchner disagreed. Italy speculated that Ethiopia likely did not have an interest in intervening presently. He closed the Africa session suggesting that the G8 message on Africa should be that it is an opportunity and not a crisis.

North Korea

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¶25. (C) G8 delegations broadly agreed with a strong Japanese statement against Northern Korean provocations, particularly the recent missile test flights. Japanese FM Nakasone said dialogue was not possible in light of recent North Korean actions. He instead called for strong pressure to show North Korea that there are consequences for its actions and eventually force North Korea to return to the bargaining table. The U.S. called for G8 coordination to fully implement UNSCR 1874. Russia stressed that 1874 should be implemented exactly as agreed, with particular attention to the requirements for high seas inspections and cautioned that additional unilateral actions would not strengthen the UNSC position.

Afghanistan/Pakistan

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¶26. (C) UK Foreign Minister Miliband introduced the afternoon session on Afghanistan and Pakistan. He cautiously praised the U.S. linkage of Afghanistan and Pakistan but warned that all should be aware of the dangers of this linkage and the profound differences between the two countries. He noted that Pakistan does not want to be seen as merely part of the Afghan solutions. He cautioned that while the insurgencies in both countries are clearly linked, the capacity, status of

ROME 00000776 007.4 OF 007

armed forces, history, economy, social and class dynamics in the two countries are very different.

¶27. (C) On Afghanistan, Miliband noted that the G8 priorities should be on governance, reconciliation, and the economy. On governance, he stressed the importance of the appointment of "clean" local and provincial governors and noted that this power lies directly with the Afghan President. He noted that any solution in Afghanistan will involve some degree of

reconciliation separating the ideological core of the Taliban from more moderate Afghans caught on the wrong side of the conflict. He said mobilizing the agricultural economy would be key to dealing with drug trafficking and security problems in the country.

¶28. (C) On Pakistan, Miliband noted changing attitudes with initial concerns about a middle class exodus from Islamabad because of military actions against insurgents giving way to a decreased level of concern. He said G8 members should focus on supporting the IMF program, solving the internally displaced persons crisis, and encouraging further Zardari-Singh engagement. He particularly stressed the need to push for Pakistani prosecution of the Mumbai attackers. Italy and the EU stressed the need for the afternoon meeting to produce concrete results, possibly on new initiatives that would have an immediate impact, such as completing rail lines or reinforcing the Afghan energy grid.

DIBBLE